



## Overview

# ***Summer Work/Travel*** **Exchange Visitor Program (J-Visa)**

The Summer Work/Travel program is a Congressionally authorized program. Under the authority of the *Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961*, as amended, the Department of State (Department) designates private sector organizations and government agencies to conduct exchange visitor programs in one or more of 13 different exchange visitor program categories. The Summer Work/Travel program is one category. The Summer Work/Travel program is designed to achieve the educational objectives of international exchange by involving *bona fide* foreign college/university students directly in the daily life of the people of the United States through travel and temporary work opportunities. You can acquire a list of designated sponsors for this category by going to our website and clicking on '[Catalog of Designated Sponsors](#)' and clicking on 'Summer Work/Travel.'

Through the Summer Work/Travel program, foreign college/university students enter the United States to work for a maximum of four months during their summer vacation. Vocational students are not eligible. Program regulations permit students to repeat participation in this program more than once. Participating students are to receive the same salary and benefits as those received by U.S. citizens in the same or similar positions, and sponsors are required to inform participants about the Federal Minimum Wage requirement. Sponsors must also provide participants, prior to their departure to the United States, with the name and location of their employer, as well as information regarding any contractual obligations related to their acceptance of paid employment in the United States if employment is pre-arranged.

For those participants for whom employment has not been pre-arranged, sponsors must:

- 1) Ensure that participants have sufficient resources to support themselves during their search for employment;
- 2) Provide participants with pre-departure information that explains how to seek employment and secure lodging in the United States;
- 3) Prepare and provide a job directory that includes at least as many job listings as the number of participants entering the United States without pre-arranged employment; and,
- 4) Undertake reasonable efforts to secure suitable employment for participants unable to find jobs on their own after one week of their arrival in the United States.

Program participants may work anywhere in the United States. However, Department regulations prohibit the placement of program participants as domestic help in U.S. households or in positions requiring them to invest their own money for inventory, such as door-to-door sales (to see a copy of the Summer Work/Travel regulations, refer to Section 62.32 of the '[Exchange Visitor Program regulations \(22 CFR Part 62\)](#)'). Except for participation in the category of Alien Physician, any employment involving patient care is prohibited in the Exchange Visitor Program. Most students typically work in non-skilled service positions at resorts, hotels, restaurants, and amusement parks. However, summer internships in U.S. businesses and other organizations (i.e., architecture, science research, graphic arts, publishing and other media communication, advertising, computer software and electronics, and legal offices, etc.) are allowed, so long as the internship does not exceed the program's four-month maximum duration, and is completed during the student's summer vacation.